

Amendments to the Claims

Claim 1 (Previously presented): A rake attachment for a PTO-driven large bale baler comprising:

a frame having a front end and a rear end along a longitudinal axis, and a passageway between said front and rear ends for a PTO shaft;

the front end including a connection adapted for connection of the frame to a motive means;

the rear end including connection adapted for connection of the frame to a said large baler;

a ground-driven, non-powered wheel rake connected to and moveable between a working position extended to a raking width laterally from the frame and a stored position raised from the working position;

an actuator operably connected between the frame and the wheel rake allowing selective actuation of the wheel rake between working and stored positions;

a suspension operably associated with the wheel rake to allow the wheel rake to move, over a range, independently of the frame when in the working position, to allow the wheel rake to follow variations in terrain.

Claim 2 (Cancelled).

Claim 3 (Currently amended): The rake attachment of claims 2-1 wherein the frame includes bearing members along the passage.

Claim 4 (Previously presented): The rake attachment of claim 1 wherein the connection on the front end of the frame comprises a hitch.

Claim 5 (Previously presented): The rake attachment of claim 1 wherein the connection on the front end comprises a hitch from a said large bale baler.

Claim 6 (Previously presented): The rake attachment of claim 1 wherein the connection on the rear-end comprises one or more frame pieces and bolts.

Claim 7 (Previously presented): The rake attachment of claim 6 wherein the frame pieces are adapted to match up with a large bale baler hitch connection.

Claim 8 (Previously presented): The rake attachment of claim 1 wherein the wheel rake comprises a wheel rotatably mounted on an arm attached to the frame member, the wheel having a rotational axis, a diameter and a perimeter, the perimeter including a plurality of spaced apart, generally outwardly extending tines.

Claim 9 (Previously presented): The rake attachment of claim 8 wherein the rotational axis of the wheel is at an angle from the longitudinal axis of the frame.

Claim 10 (Previously presented): The rake attachment of claim 9 wherein the angle is in the range of 20 to 60 .

Claim 11 (Previously presented): The rake attachment of claim 9 wherein the angle is in the range of 35 to 50 .

Claim 12 (Previously presented): The rake attachment of claim 9 wherein the angle is approximately 45 .

Claim 13 (Previously presented): The rake attachment of claim 9 further comprising a second ground-driven, non-powered wheel rake comprising a wheel rotatably mounted on a second arm attached to the frame.

Claim 14 (Previously presented): The rake attachment of claim 13 comprising a plurality of rake wheels on each arm.

Claim 15 (Previously presented): The rake attachment of claim 14 wherein the wheels are spaced apart but overlapped.

Claim 16 (Previously presented): The rake attachment of claim 1 further comprising, in combination, a large bale baler having a pick-up width, wherein the raking width extends laterally outside the pick-up width.

Claim 17 (Previously presented): The rake attachment of claim 15 wherein the raking width is substantially greater than the pick-up width.

Claim 18 (Previously presented): The rake attachment of claim 1 wherein the wheel rake comprises two arms extendable out from the frame and a plurality of rake wheels on each arm having planes of rotations at an angle to the longitudinal axis of the frame.

Claim 19 (Previously presented): The rake attachment of claim 18 wherein the rake wheels are spaced apart but overlapping.

Claim 20 (Previously presented): The rake attachment of claim 18 further comprising connections between each arm and the frame to raise and lower the rake wheels.

Claim 21 (Previously presented): The rake attachment of claim 18 further comprising an adjustable mount between the rake wheels and the arms comprising a component adapted to allow adjustability in raking width and vertical height of the rake wheel.

Claim 22 (Currently amended): The rake attachment of claim 18 further comprising a pivot between the frame and the rake wheels to allow the rake wheels to maintain contact with the terrain over variations in the ~~train~~ terrain.

Claim 23 (Previously presented): The rake attachment of claim 8 wherein the arm includes a section that can pivot over a range around a pivot pin, the rake wheel being attached on either side of the pivot pin.

Claim 24 (Previously presented): The rake attachment of claim 18 further comprising, in combination, a baler, the baler attached to the connection member at the rear end of the frame; the baler having a pick-up width, the raking width extending outside the pick-up width.

Claim 25 (Previously presented): A large bale baling apparatus comprising:  
a large bale baler having an intake width and a connection member;  
a hitch adaptable for connection to a tractor;  
an intermediate framework attachable between the hitch and the connection member on the large bale baler;  
at least one arm attached at one end to the intermediate framework and extendible from the framework;  
at least one raking member operatively attached to the arm, the raking member comprising a ground-driven, non-powered wheel rake;  
a suspension member operatively connected between the raking member and the framework to allow independent movement of the raking member relative the framework;  
the arm including a mounting member to allow movement of the arm between raised and working positions, the arm and raking member being configured such that when the framework is in operative connection with the hitch and baler and the hitch is connected to the tractor, in the raised position the arm and would not interfere with operation of the

baler, allow backing, allow non-baling transport, and allow storage, and in a working position, the raking member extending laterally from the framework outside the intake width of the baler;

an actuator connected to the framework and a said arm adapted to selectively move the arm by remote activation between the raised and working positions.

Claim 26 (Previously presented): The apparatus of claim 25 further comprising an implement connected between the hitch and the baler.

Claim 27 (Previously presented): The apparatus of claim 26 wherein the implement is a shredder.

Claim 28 (Previously presented): The apparatus of claim 25 further in combination with a tractor, which is operatively connected in front of the rake member and baler.

Claim 29 (Previously presented): A method of baling comprising:  
in a single pass through a field, baling material through a pick-up width of a baler; while, from behind a motive means, raking material from an area substantially outside the pick-up width of the baler with a non-powered, ground-contacting wheel rake that is independently moveable relative the field to follow the terrain of the field;  
selectively, by operator actuated control, raising the wheel rake a substantial vertical distance and moving the wheel rake substantially inward to allow unobstructed baling, non-baling transport, storage, or backing.

Claim 30 (Previously presented): The method of claim 29 wherein substantially outside the pick-up width of the baler comprises is at least 25% wider than the pickup width.

Claim 31 (Currently amended): A rake attachment for a PTO-driven large bale baler comprising:

a frame of less than ~~approximately six~~ a few feet in length having a front end and a rear end along a longitudinal axis, and a passageway between said front and rear ends for a PTO shaft;

the front end including a hitch connection adapted for pivotable connection of the frame to a motive means;

the rear end including connection adapted for rigid connection of the frame to a said large baler; a ground-driven, non-powered wheel rake connected to and moveable between a working position extended to a raking width laterally from the frame and a stored position raised from the working position;

an actuator operably connected between the frame and the wheel rake allowing selective actuation of the wheel rake between working and stored positions;

a suspension operably associated with the wheel rake to allow the wheel rake to move, over a range, independently of the frame when in the working position, to allow the wheel rake to follow variations in terrain;

the frame including a PTO extension shaft rotatably supported in the frame and having a first end operably connectable to a PTO of a motive means, and a second end operably connectable to the baler;

the wheel rake comprising two sets of at least two wheels, each wheel ~~of at least thirty-six inches diameter and~~ attached to the frame and moveable between stored and working positions, each set extendable to a raking width laterally and angularly from the frame on opposite sides of the frame so that in a working position the distance between farthest raking width of both sets of wheels when in working position is at least 50% greater than the intake width of the baler, each wheel of each set slightly overlapping on another;

in a stored position, the wheel rake, ~~frame being less than 8 feet wide and~~ foldable inwardly and upwardly so that the wheels of the wheel rake at least two feet are substantially off the ground.

Claim 32 (Previously presented): The rake attachment of claim 31 wherein the frame pieces are adapted to match up with a large bale baler hitch connection.

Claim 33 (Previously presented): The rake attachment of claim 31 wherein the wheel rake comprises a wheel rotatably mounted on an arm attached to the frame member, the wheel having a rotational axis, a diameter and a perimeter, the perimeter including a plurality of spaced apart, generally outwardly extending tines.

Claim 34 (Previously presented): The rake attachment of claim 33 wherein the rotational axis of the wheel is at an angle from the longitudinal axis of the frame.

Claim 35 (Currently amended): A large bale baling apparatus comprising:  
a large bale baler having an intake width and a hitch connection member;



a hitch connectable to the hitch connection member of the baler and adaptable for pivotable connection to a tractor;

an intermediate framework attachable between the hitch and the connection member on the large bale baler, and including a PTO extension shaft supported in the framework to connect a PTO of a tractor with the baler;

first and second sets of at least two non-powered, ground-driven wheel rake wheels operatively attached to the framework by a connection, ~~each wheel having at least a thirty-six inch diameter~~;

a suspension member operatively connected between the wheels and the framework to allow independent movement of the wheels relative the framework;

the connection allowing movement of the wheels between raised and working positions, in the raised position the wheels would not interfere with operation of the baler, allow backing, allow non-baling transport, and allow storage, and in a working position the wheels extend laterally from the framework outside the intake width of the baler but at an angle to the longitudinal axis of the frame;

an actuator connected to the framework and each said mount adapted to selectively move the wheels by remote activation between the raised and working positions.

Claim 36 (Previously presented): The apparatus of claim 35 further in combination with a tractor, which is operatively connected in front of the rake member and baler.

Claim 37 (Previously presented): A method of baling comprising:

in a single pass through a field, baling material through a pick-up width of a baler; while, from behind a motive means, raking material from an area substantially outside the pick-up width of the baler with two sets of non-powered, ground-contacting wheel rake, each set comprising two thirty-six inch diameter or greater wheels slightly overlapped in coverage and at an angle to the direction of travel, the sets of wheels being independently moveable relative the field to follow the terrain of the field; selectively, by operator actuated control, raising the wheel rake a substantial vertical distance and moving the wheel rake substantially inward to allow unobstructed baling, non-baling transport, storage, or backing.

Claim 38 (Previously presented): The method of claim 37 wherein the pick-up width of the baler is effectively increased at least 50% wider by the raking wheels.